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United States.
Report of the Committee of
Claims on the petition of
Kenzie & Forsythe.
1814.

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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE OF CLAIMS,

ON

THE PETITION

OF

KENZIE & FORSYTHE.

DECEMBER 31, 1813.

Read, and committed to a committee of the whole house to-morrow.

WASHINGTON:

A. & G. WAY, PRINTERS.

1814.

REPORT.

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the petition of Kenzie and Forsythe, respectfully

REPORT:

THAT the petitioners were traders at Chicago at the time of its evacuation by the American forces, and were in possession of a quantity of gunpowder and whiskey, which they had brought there for the purpose of selling. As the longer possession of that post, daily surrounded with hostile Indians, became dangerous, the commanding officer resolved to evacuate the fort, and to destroy the public property; and as the Indians were expected to take immediate possession of the place, major Heald advised the petitioners to permit their property to be also destroyed, in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the enemy, which was accordingly done. The fort was evacuated and taken possession of by the Indians immediately. In order to assist the party to make their escape, a number of horses and mules were furnished by the petitioners, which were captured about two miles from the fort.

For the destruction of the whiskey and gunpowder, and for the loss of the horses and mules, the petitioners claim compensation.

The committee believe, that the horses and mules should be paid for by the government, inasmuch as

they were in the service of the United States and were captured by the enemy, and have reported to the House a bill, which, if passed, will extend relief to them. But they cannot conceive, that the petitioners can have any claim for a compensation, on account of the destruction of their property, because it had been brought, by the petitioners, who were traders, to that place, for purposes of speculation. Nor do their pretensions to remuneration, appear to receive any strength from the circumstance of the destruction of this property by an officer of the government, because it would otherwise have fallen into the hands of the Indians, where it would have been lost to the claimants. They accordingly ask leave to propose the following resolution:

Resolved, That the petition of Kenzie and Forsythe, so far as it prays for compensation for their gunpowder and whiskey, destroyed as aforesaid, ought not to be granted.

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